DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 217 865 IR 010 250

AUTHOR Ungerleider, Charles S., Ed.
TITLE Perspectives on Television Education. Television Education Workshop: Multiculturalism Canada (Ottawa, Canada, February 26-28, 1981).
INSTITUTION Ministry of State Multiculturalism, Ottawa (Ontario).
REPORT NO ISBN-0-662-11742-5
PUB DATE Feb 81
NOTE 86p.; Photographs may not reproduce well.
AVAILABLE FROM Multiculturalism Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A OM5 (no charge while supply lasts).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Canada Natives; Children; Cognitive Processes; *Critical Thinking; *Cultural Influences; Curriculum Development; Elementary Secondary Education; Fantasy; Multicultural Education; Political Influences; Rural Urban Differences; *Television Viewing; *Visual Literacy; Workshops; *Young Children
IDENTIFIERS *Media Literacy

ABSTRACT

This report contains discussion papers presented at a workshop held in 1981 by the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Canadian Department of the Secretary of State to consider the effects of television on public attitudes and to develop approaches for educating viewers to analyze critically what they see. The papers include (1) an overview of the "Workshop on Television Education," by Charles Ungerleider; (2) "The Politics of a Critical Awareness of Media," by Barb Thomas; (3) "Visual Literacy, Young Children, and Multicultural Curriculum," by Joan Collins; (4) "Speak Loudly and Carry a Small Television," by Lon Dubinsky; (5) "Doubts About Television Education," by Arlene Moscovitch; (6) "Ethnic Barriers in the Differentiation of Fantasy from Reality," by Gary Granzberg; (7) "Children, Cognition, and Television," by Bill Winn; (8) "The Development of Television Education," by Nikos Metallinos; (9) "The Critical Viewing of Television," by Jack Livesley; (10) "Impressions on Television Education," by Lois J. Baron; (11) "A Teacher's Perspective on Television Education," by Louis Ho; (12) "Television Education: A Teacher's View," by Barbara Esdale; and (13) an "Epilogue," by Charles Ungerleider. A list of workshop participants is included. (Author/JL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED217865

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Perspectives on television education

Charles S. Ungerleider
Editor

Television Education Workshop
Multiculturalism Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
February 26-28, 1981

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Kerry Johnston

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

GROWING TOGETHER
ANNIVERSARY
1
MULTICULTURALISM CANADA
MULTICULTURALISME CANADA
ANNIVERSAIRE
S'ÉPANOUIR ENSEMBLE
2

IR010257

Photographs - Chuck Heath and TVOntario

© Minister of Supply and Services Canada 1981
Cat. No. Ci 96-16/1981E
ISBN 0-662-11742-5
BEAUREGARD PRESS LIMITED

CONTENTS

Introduction V

Workshop on Television Education: an overview/ Charles Ungerleider 1

The Politics of a Critical Awareness of Media/Barb Thomas 9

Visual Literacy, Young Children and Multicultural Curriculum/Joan Collins 17

Speak Loudly and Carry a Small Television/Lon Dubinsky 21

Doubts About Television Education/Arlene Moscovitch 29

Ethnic Barriers in the Differentiation of Fantasy from Reality/Gary Granzberg 34

Children, Cognition and Television/Bill Winn 42

The Development of Television Education/Nikos Metallinos 49

The Critical Viewing of Television/Jack Livesley 52

Impressions on Television Education/Lois J. Baron 58

A Teacher's Perspective on Television Education/Louis Ho 63

Television Education: a teacher's view/Barbara K. Esdale 70

Epilogue/Charles Ungerleider 75

Workshop Participants 79

INTRODUCTION

This report contains discussion papers presented in February 1981 at a workshop held in Ottawa by the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Department of the Secretary of State to consider the effects of television on public attitudes and to develop approaches toward educating viewers to analyze critically what they see.

The concept of multiculturalism seeks to promote a sense of belonging to Canada among all Canadian ethnocultural groups. A cursory review of television programming indicates that the medium tends to frustrate, rather than assist, this aim. Television seems to principally portray a white, middle and upper-middle class society. Visible minorities are either ignored, stereotyped or portrayed only in troubled circumstances; little mention is made of their technical or social advances and contributions to society. As a result, mainstream and minority groups may feel that these people do not belong in the Canadian mosaic. Since only discerning viewers will demand that television show Canada as it really is, the directorate sought the advice of experts in television education on how to develop such viewers.

The workshop was organized by Roberta Russell of the directorate, with Professor Charles Ungerleider of the University of British Columbia as chairman.

We hope that the workshop and this report will encourage and support the efforts of individuals in this relatively uncharted area of Canadian education. In addition, we hope to seek educators' reactions to the contents of the report and to initiatives that the directorate is planning in this area.

I wish to record our thanks to Professor Ungerleider, without whose enthusiasm and energy the workshop and this report would not have been possible.

Orest Kruhlak
Director
Multiculturalism Directorate

WORKSHOP ON TELEVISION EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW

Charles Ungerleider, Workshop Chairman
University of British Columbia

Three institutions--family, school and television--play prominent parts in defining people's identities, beliefs, and behaviours.

The family plays a central part in shaping identity because, during the impressionable initial stages of a person's life, one is utterly dependent upon the family for survival. In passing judgment on people and events, the family defines who its members are, what they believe, and how they behave. The absence of points of comparision for the family's judgments helps to contribute to the acceptance people give to their family's interpretation of the world.

Schools exert much the same sort of influence as the family because in the western world, at least, schooling is universal and compulsory. Schools exert their influence as much by their ability to affect life chances as they do by what is taught within them. People are also dependent upon schools. The certificates schools confer or fail to confer determine the opportunities and constraints people will encounter throughout their lives.

Formal schooling developed during a period when experience with the world was either direct or influenced by print. The invention of movable type and the creation of universal, compulsory schooling made widespread literacy possible.

Schooling has traditionally involved learning how to control one's symbolic universe by reading, writing, and speaking. In a world dominated by print, this training was sufficient.

The development of print technology and mass public education diminished the importance of religion as a factor for defining identities, beliefs, and behaviours. The spread of information and opinion made possible by printing and schooling diminished the church's control over what people knew and believed.

Today, television has a profound effect upon people. television has replaced religion as a force for defining identities, beliefs, and behaviours. The erosion of the conservative influence of religion that began with the invention of movable type and public schooling was accelerated by the development of video technology.

Before the advent of television, people who could not read the dominant language used to produce books, pamphlets, and newspapers were hindered in their understanding of the societies in which they lived. Their orientations were more local than those of people who could read the dominant language.

The local orientations did not change until schools could teach them to read the dominant language used in the society. People who have not mastered the language used by print media rely upon television for their social and cultural knowledge.

In Canada, a large portion of what immigrants and people 30 years of age and younger know about the world in which they live

and about their place within it, they know because of television. Television is the medium these groups use for informing themselves about the world.

Television hastens change in rapidly changing societies by compressing time and space. Television reveals events which would have otherwise remained hidden; it also presents events in distant places along with those closer to home. By compressing time and space, television generates exponential change in the social fabric. In the process, television alters conceptions of time and space as well as the expectations people hold.

The pervasiveness and impact of television on immigrants and the young are such that failure to consider television seriously limits our understanding of the identities, beliefs and behaviours of a substantial portion of our society's members.

In February 1981, the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Secretary of State hosted a workshop on television education. By design, the participants invited to the workshop brought varied interests to their common concern with television education. For two and a half days, the participants focussed on the following questions about television education:

1 What do people need to know to become educated about television?

   a How much knowledge of the technical aspects of the medium do they need to be considered educated?

   b How much knowledge of society do they need to be considered educated?

c How much knowledge of perception do they need to be considered educated?

2 Who bears the responsibility of educating people about television?

a How will the formalization of television education affect how and what people will learn?

b What would be the consequence of failing to educate people about television?

3 What point of view toward television should be expressed or implied by attempts to educate people about television?

What ethical considerations apply between those who are teaching and those who are learning?

4 Is there readiness for acquiring the knowledge and skills associated with being educated about television in the same way that some people speak of readiness for reading or formal reasoning?

a What developmental characteristics of the learner should be taken into account in designing programs to promote television education?

b What cultural and social characteristics of the learner should be taken into account in designing programs to promote television education?

5 What prior knowledge and experience must a person have to successfully educate about television?

6 What framework of concepts, principles, and generalizations should guide the development of television education?

7 What should be taken as evidence that people have become educated about television?

8 What relations should TV education bear to other forms of education?

The questions were designed as anchor points for discussions which sought to encourage each participant to share his or her perspective about television education. The papers included in this report are preliminary thoughts about the issues discussed.

Throughout our deliberations Barb Thomas reminded us that questions about the media of mass communication are essentially those about the distribution of power within and among societies. Because that point is often overlooked by those who study and write about media, it is probably wise to begin the volume with Barb's "The Politics of a Critical Awareness of Media."

Joan Collins places television education in the larger contexts of visual literacy and multicultural education. She addresses the question: What do people need to know in order to become educated about television? In focusing her remarks on young children, Collins tells us that we should strive to help children understand the issues they might face during their lifetimes by helping them to acquire particular technical, social and perceptual skills.

In "Speak Loudly and Carry a Small Television," Lon Dubinsky cautions that answers to the question "Who has responsibility for educating people about television?" are closely linked to other questions. Lon is as suspicious about the limitations of schooling for fostering critical studies of television as he is about probing the intimacy of the worlds of children and adolescents. He is unequivocal that education about television is education about society and about ourselves. Dubinsky provocatively examines conventional assumptions about the responsibility, the content, and the method of television education.

Arlene Moscovitch is equally cautious about television education. She is concerned that the study of television in schools will expropriate an important part of student's private experience. She is also suspicious of the implications that there are those who know about television and those who are uninformed about television because it is implicity elitist in outlook.

Gary Granzberg's article cautions us about cultural limitations on television education. His work bears directly on the question "What point of view toward television should be expressed or implied by attempts to educate people about television?" It also addresses the question about the ethical considerations that should apply between those who are teaching about television and those who are learning. Readers will no doubt be intrigued by the trickster imagery Granzberg presents.

Bill Winn argues that those responsible for the development of children's television programs and materials to promote television education should direct their attention to the psychological and cultural influences which determine the meanings children derive from television. His article provides a focus for thinking about these important dimensions.

Both Nikos Metallinos and Jack Livesley focus on the question "What framework of concepts, principles and generalizations should guide the development of television education?" Metallinos argues forcefully for the importance of

explaining the process of making television images. Jack Livesley tells us how TVOntario gets pupils to understand the techniques and topics of television and, then, to use television as a tool for self-discovery and a catalyst for creativity.

Lois Baron, Louis Ho and Barbara Esdale provide their perspectives on each of the questions addressed during the workshop. Knowledge of their respective backgrounds will help the reader appreciate the similarities and differences among their approaches. Lois' research work with preschool children, Louis' work at the elementary level, and Barbara's work at the secondary level shape their views. Their suggestions provide a solid foundation for working out programs in television education.

During the conference Chuck Heath made many provocative contributions to our discussions. For this volume, Chuck changed media. We are fortunate to have a photographic statement of his perspective on television education.

I should emphasize that the ideas presented in this volume are provisional. They are intended to stimulate action among those concerned about television education and those for whom television education is a newly developed interest.

THE POLITICS OF A CRITICAL AWARENESS OF MEDIA

Barb Thomas, Cross Cultural Communication Centre, Toronto

A critical appraisal of one's sources of information and those factors which affect one's attitudes and opinions should be integral to everyone's education. Mass media, particularly television, present images of people, relationships, and our society which cannot help but shape the way we see ourselves; the possibilities we see for establishing secure, equal relationships between men and women and between people of different ethnic and class backgrounds; the possibilities we entertain for solving personal problems; our understanding of conflict, particularly ethnic and class conflict; the social issues we define as important; the people we look to for leadership--indeed the people we identify as important; our understanding and sympathies with differing interest groups; our understanding of our own history; the attitude we develop towards other countries and the people from those countries; and the hopes we hold and the approaches we seek for solving social problems.

Television is a powerful medium for reflecting, reinforcing and legitimizing a world view of ideology through what it selects to show and what it elects not to show. This is reason enough to "study mass media" as part of a continuing effort to understand ourselves, our society, and the beliefs and power upon which our society is based.

There is a second important reason for studying mass media. It concerns the legitimate needs people have for forms of cultural expression which reflect their lives, concerns, hopes,

fears, fantasies, and the degree to which mass media can perform this function. "Culture" has, to a large extent, become a vast industry which pours ideas and images in one direction--from the "creators of culture" to the "consumer of culture." If the development of print had serious consequences for the oral tradition and lessened the possibilities for people to participate in and respond to the artist, modern technology has taken that process a giant step further. Not only are the offerings of television a one-way communication in which the relationship tends to isolate the viewer from the source and from other people, but the commercial basis of television--of mass media in general--precludes meaningful audience reponse. Viewers and listeners become consumers.

Consumers must choose among mass-marketed cultural forms whose accessibility depends on their ability to make a profit--to entertain and not offend, to pacify and not to challenge. A very few people select what we will hear and see, based on what those people think we want. But the range of "choice" is more illusory than real. Choice is illusory when we can turn to "Dukes of Hazzard" or "Barney Miller" or when the 10 major radio stations in Toronto all spew out "soft rock" to the exclusion of much else. Where is the choice to watch the Mummers on television, or to listen to renaissance music or early Canadian folk music on the radio? While there are still many genuine expressions of popular culture in music, books, theatre and film, these are less accessible and less familiar because

they are less available.

The impact of mass media is so pervasive that we are convinced this state of affairs is "normal" and that those things which are missing cannot be shown or heard because they hold no audience appeal. But the audience for television programs like "Dallas" has been created. How and why are such decisions made? Why is there not a broader range of cultural expression available to us through television, and why do we have so little say in what that range will be, except through relatively small efforts at alternative programming?

If the goal of education is to develop informed active citizens, capable of finding and assessing information, able to imagine creative possibilities for solving personal and societal problems, and capable of acting on an understanding of themselves and their society, mass media present formidable obstacles to such development. People must be able to assess the degree to which the mass media are an expression of their culture, their lives, experiences and hopes.

What do we need to know about media to benefit from and not be dominated by its pervasive influence? We need to know the ways in which the various media--print, video, film, music--are different in terms of their presentation of human experiences, in the tools they use and in their impact on us. We must know something about these tools and how they are used to create a certain effect and impact. What are the limitations and possibilities of each of these media? What does each do best? What is each used for? We must know that the people who make a

television program select from a vast amount of potential raw material in deciding what they will delineate and explore. We should understand what informs the selection and omission of information.

We must understand more about the commercial basis of mass media. Who writes, selects, distributes and markets the news, music, books, films and television programs most accessible to us? How do the interests of these people affect what we will see and hear?

We must be able to decode the messages and images of what is presented to us. What does this program say to us about human relationships which are considered desirable; about effective ways of resolving personal problems; about aspects of character which are considered good or important; about lives which are considered important and worthwhile; about issues presented as significant; and about interests we are encouraged to support?

In addition to examining the messages of existing content, we must ask what is not shown. The very omission of elements of individual and social life is a message in itself about what is considered "normal" and "acceptable." Those omissions may be the very elements and possibilities that we should explore in our personal and social development. For example, three basic arenas of conflict which profoundly affect people and their ability to take control of their lives are conflicts between the sexes, between ethnic groups, and between social classes. We must

closely examine the conflicts which mass media choose to probe and those the media choose to ignore.

To complicate matters further, "the media" are not monolithic. The people making decisions in media industries are tireless in their attempts to keep programs attuned to contemporary issues. To a certain extent, television programs do reflect changes in sex roles, in ethnic relationships, in concerns of working people, in current problems, and in the political and economic climate. This ability to adapt and incorporate issues makes a critical assessment of messages and the ideology of the media even more complex.

Learning about the media and how our opinions are shaped by it is part of a life-long learning process which may begin with simple questions to young children about the connection between a story book, or television program, and their own experiences. "Is this the way it is at your house? How is it similar and different?" These questions are appropriate for adolescents and adults, depending on the level of sophistication of discussion. These matters concern everyone, both "educated" and "to be educated."

While it is true that some people know more about how a medium works, the industry behind it, and the cognitive impact on the viewer, reader or listener, it is also true that everyone shares experience with the media. Any attempt to "educate" people about media should acknowledge their experience and provide some forum for discussion of reponses and concerns. It is not just information that needs imparting; it is the

opportunity to critically assess what various media forms are saying and ignoring, and how these messages affect one's own growth and development. This means that the person creating the learning situations must also be learning.

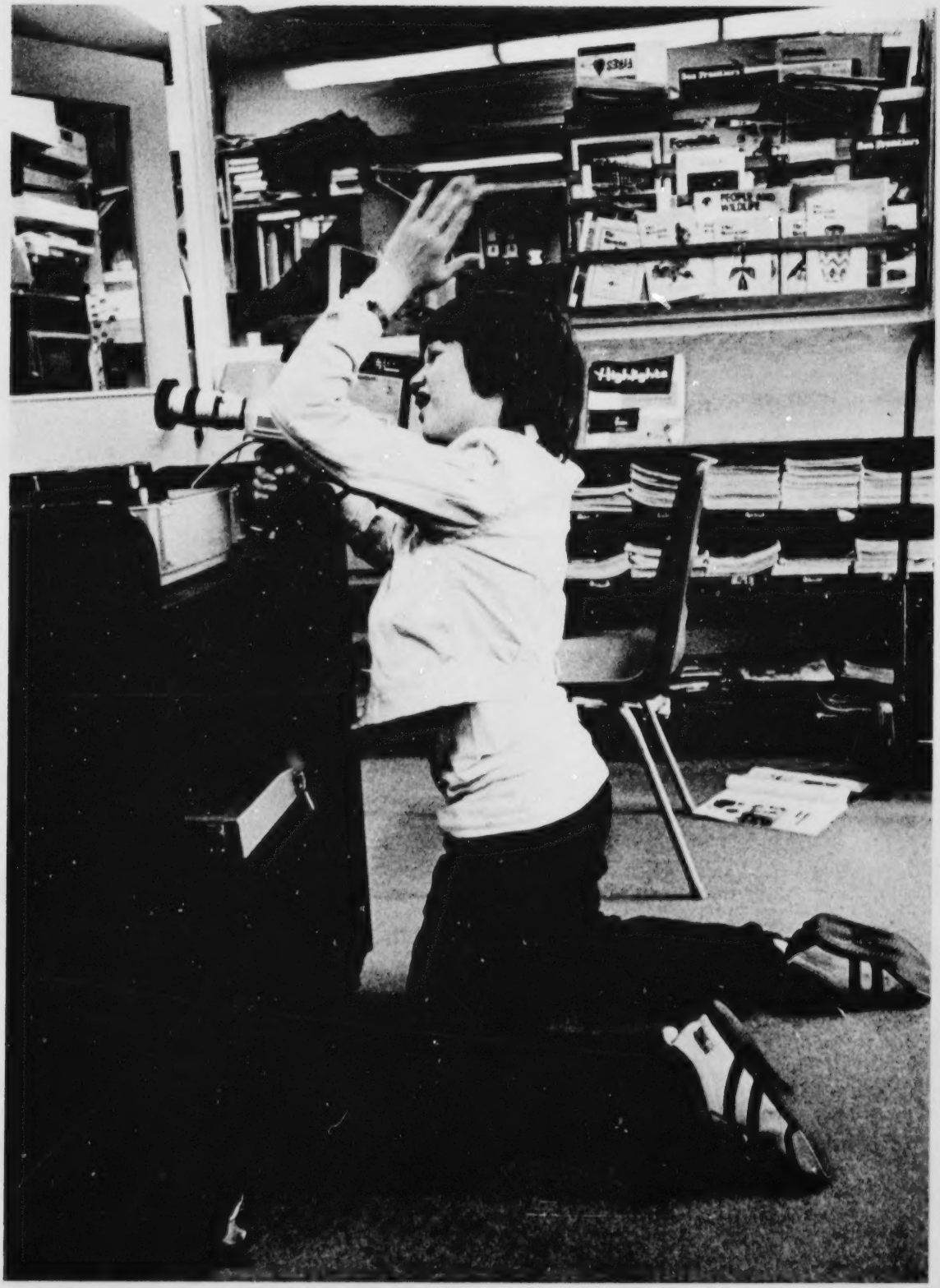
Perhaps, because it is easier to grasp, the current approach to "media literacy," tends to emphasize the technical tools at the disposal of each media form, and to examine how these tools are used to create a given impact. These are important things to understand. The primary aim is often to dissuade children, in particular, from watching so much pulp television or from reading junk novels, and to spend more time watching responsible programs and reading more challenging literature.

We do have to encourage a more discriminating use of media. Responsible and richer examples of media contain messages about personal relationships and one's position in the society similar to those contained in pulp television and junk novels. But they often omit an exploration of the conflicts mentioned earlier, and are more subtle in their biases. Encouraging a more discriminating use of media won't provide such an approach and adults with an understanding of how content decisions are made, what implications the commercial basis of media has on the selection of content, and what experiences and perspectives are commonly missing.

We rarely examine the role media plays in reinforcing our society's ideology, because to do that we must examine the ideology itself. We are more comfortable examining other countries' ideologies.

For many people, it is very threatening to look at media as a conditioning force. Conversely, educators who do see the media in political terms, find it difficult to seriously examine television programs they find insulting and time-wasting. They would broaden their student's horizons with alternative, socially-conscious examples of media. Sometimes these same educators find it difficult to see their own tastes for more sophisticated materials of the same genres as connected to those of their students. Is the "Forsyte Saga" so far removed from "As the World Turns"? When we earnestly want children to become engaged with more challenging materials, it is difficult to admit the real appeal of slicker, faster, mass-media forms.

We need to develop a sense of proportion and a sense of humour about our tastes and their connection to the tastes of students. Mass media have affected us, the cultural expressions we seek and our children, in spite of whatever intellectual understanding we have struggled to attain. Any attempts to develop a critical awareness of mass media will have to recognize this. Such attempts must not make judgements about people who watch "Love Boat." We must acknowledge our partial surrender to mass media's grasp at the same time that we attempt to puncture the "normalness" and pervasiveness of it all.



VISUAL LITERACY, YOUNG CHILDREN AND MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM

Joan Collins, Simon Fraser University

Today's children will spend most of their lives in the next century. They will live in a society in which changes occur rapidly, producing corresponding changes in different aspects of their lives. Although we cannot predict what life will be like 50 years from now, we can help children understand the issues they may face and acquire the skills they will need to deal with the society that emerges.

Although the visual environment is an increasingly pervasive and influential component of our culture, it continues to be one of the least understood. By their enormous and encompassing impact on today's culture the mass media have transformed the way in which we view, integrate, and understand traditional knowledge.

The increasing volume of visual messages makes visual literacy important. We need to study visual thinking and its impact on our culture. Before the broader perspective of the effect of visual thinking on culture can be understood the creation and interpretation of symbols needs to be better understood.

Language (that which carries meaning) is the vehicle that enables communication to occur. Each form of language--verbal, written, and visual--operates using a different medium and appeals to different learning modalities, but all forms interact. This interaction enables children to develop critical sensibility toward all visual communication.

Evidence suggests that this process of understanding is a developmental one. Children need to understand how to use video. They need to experience what the equipment will do and then proceed to self-production of media messages.

The pictures children take provide them with mirrors for viewing themselves in relation to their environment. Picture taking helps them to examine visual images produced by others outside their immediate reference.

Current television programming provides a focus for the development of teaching units that would produce the following:

i Increasing appreciation for visual messages of cross-cultural groups;

ii improving personal, ethnic, and cultural self-concept;

iii improving communication with individuals, ethnic groups and other cultures;

iv increasing ability to read "visual languages" of individuals, ethnic groups, and other cultures;

v increasing appreciation for visual messages of cross-cultural groups;

vi increasing ability to understand and identify ethnic or cultural content and/or bias in television; and

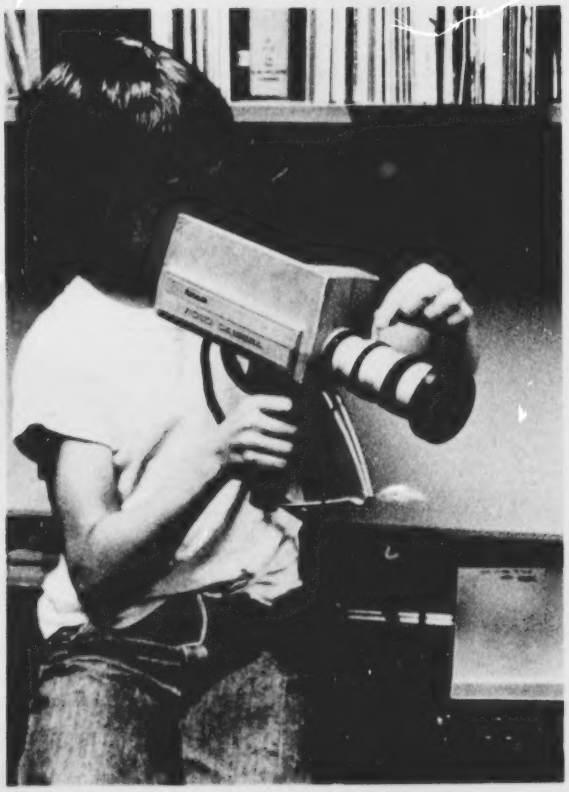
vii increasing responsiveness to the human situation, appreciation of ethnic diversity and development of attitudes appropriate for responding to the cultural pluralism in Canadian society.

These objectives are aimed toward developing the notion that in order to discern what an event means requires an understanding of the context in which it occurs. Cultural and social characteristics of the learner interact with this process. We

need to look more closely at the nature and kinds of multicultural representation on television occurring at the moment. What are the determinants of meaning created within this context?

Perception is selective. There is no value-free mode of seeing. Discussion enables children to refine their perceptions, to identify events not previously perceived, to integrate, and to appraise what they have seen.

Perceptual processes are never serial. We do not see and then assess significance. It is an ongoing process, focussed in a sensitive and conscious way, of creating new frameworks within which to study visual thinking.



SPEAK LOUDLY AND CARRY A SMALL TELEVISION

Lon Dubinsky, Dalhousie University

One of the salient features we have to recognize about television is that it is an institution. We attend to it for needs and wants in the same way we use and perpetuate other institutions such as banks and schools. Still it does not seem like an institution. Watching television is also a choice as opposed to compulsory schooling. Still the proliferation of television qualifies it as an institution.

Television is here entrenched in our immediate social and cultural world. We use it and rely on it variously for companionship, information, therapy, education, pacification and authorization. Banks and schools are finding it increasingly difficult to offer this array of consumer services.

If the desire is to educate about television in schools, then the institutional aspect must be acknowledged. That will be difficult even within a social studies curriculum which has a critical outlook. Schools don't like to expose themselves, which is why there is little study in schools about institutions. Comparison leads to other comparisons. Inevitably, it will be almost impossible to talk about television without talking about schools. To cite one example: the school timetable's strict temporal and subject divisions is as unbending as a daily television programming schedule. The makers of commercial television are more clever. Recess happens about every 10 minutes and that makes the audience want to come back for more.

These institutional realities of schools and television

require that we be clear on the kind of education about television we are proposing. It is also important to examine the interplay between television and other media forms. I raise the first item (the second will gradually emerge) because we are intent on introducing the study of a phenomenon which is an integral part of everyone's life experience in North American society. Not having a television set doesn't cancel out this significance. As the recent retirement of Walter Cronkite demonstrated one did not have to witness the final sign off to know that "that's the way it is" now.

The most telling illustration of television's ubiquitousness is how it has contributed to our language base and subsequently how we derive and give meanings to things and events. Michael Arlen was quite accurate to characterize the Vietnam debacle as the "living-room war." As for the power of words, if not the more powerful combination of certain ones, we can go much further back than Dingbat or Mork. "Father Knows Best" that the "$64,000 Question" is "What's My Line."

How do we approach a medium that is so much a part of us? Even when it isn't, it authoritatively presumes to be given its powers of distribution. If the goal is to educate about television we have to clearly delineate what we are up to. Any education about television is an education about society and thus about ourselves. We are consumers and the consumed. There is no getting around it.

One cannot confine the curriculum to a study of the medium's technical aspects because even they are grounded in larger social practices and procedures. Television editing is the most significant example. There are editing formulae and technique particular to television but these are part of a larger repertoire of editing procedures which includes those of other media such as film and newspapers. This larger group also takes in the wide range of editing practices we use to construct our social world. What for instance are you reading into or taking out of what I am saying as I provide my views on educating about television? All these procedures become more complex and intricate when we consider how each is emulating or extending another. McLuhan may well have been correct when he titled his book: Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man. Now I can't resist the extension: Understanding Man: the Extension of Media.

To be forthright about television with students, one of its major consumer groups, it is essential that a whole array of these practices and procedures be articulated. This necessitates getting to the "business behind the box" to use a title once again, in this case Les Brown's appropriate designation. We also need to be constantly reminded of two factors: the limitations of schools in fostering critical study and the intimate worlds of children and adolescents of which television is a part.

A teacher must grapple with institutional restrictions and at the same time degrees of instrusion. Schools have already designed a way of getting around this in the form of values education, but it is usually with more interference and less respect. To no one's surprise "the media" have become a central focus of this educative enterprise. There is a tendency to de-emphasize, even disregard, practices and procedures while focusing on the "values" that ensue.

Values education is a resting place for educating about television, but it should be discouraged as a source of residential allegiance given its limitations. It also serves to give even more credibility to two questionable elements of many existing curricula[1] that set out to educate about television, even if they are not an inclusive part of the "values ed" domain. These are: 1) the logging and assessment of viewing behaviour 2) the pressing need to develop reasoning skills for "figuring out" television. The former is more the perpetuation of a curricular routine than a concern with television. The latter assumes that reasoning skills will enable us to triumph over practices such as editing and the inculcation of questionable values.

1 For a sampling of the kind of curricula I am referring to see: Searching for Alternatives: Critical TV Viewing, Journal of Communication, Summer 1980, Volume 30, Number 3

The term viewing behaviour represents a certain curricular adherence and methodological bias. The behaviourai persuasion is at work in the design of the curriculum and the tasks to be undertaken. It is not coincidental that viewing behaviour is part of a curriculum whose content is specified by objectives. This is all too quantitative and controlled for a medium as pervasive as television unless the critical intention is to emulate the forms of the medium. Characterizing what amounts initially to television watching as viewing behaviour also limits and reduces what the experience may be. It is like applying the Nielsen ratings system complete with educational markers for habit formation, attitude response, and other behavioural measurements.

The pressing need for skills suggests we can divorce television from its contexts and apply the necessary techniques. This is a therapeutic approach, the only problem is I am not sure who is the patient--the viewer or the television.

The suggestion of skills also brings the other mass media into play. Are we to create a cadre of skills for these media or is it only television that requires treatment? If there is a need to educate about all of them, do different techniques apply to different media or are systems advocates correct in insisting that there is a definitive set of procedures for all the learning? The trouble with the emphasis on techniques and skills is that it detracts from the institutional realities already described. It also tends to isolate television to the point of putting it in cultural quarantine.

So what are some of the options? What else can we do in the name of educating about television? I want to close with two brief claims. In placing television in the school curriculum, must we choose according to subject, the language arts umbrella for instance, or is it more productive to place television first within a continuum and then attend to inevitable classification? I favor the latter and suggest that television must be placed within the context of its visual ancestors: painting, photography and film. This necessitates my first non-entirely word representation.

These are paintings:

These are photographs:

This is a film:

This is television:

This sort of visual geneology sparks my other claim. Television is more than visual. All of the practices and procedures implemented must take into account that television is forcibly and dramatically an extension of oral discourse. We are

so grounded in the use of written language to explain and interpret that we underestimate the power of sound. The "artistocracy of print,"[2] as Jonathan Miller calls it, prevails most noticeably in schools despite the proliferation of media like television which are visual, verbal, and vocal. An authentic coming to terms with television will only emerge when we critically address the existing order and give equal prominence to other forms of articulation.

2 Jonathan Miller in McLuhan Hot & Cool, ed., Gerald Emanuel Sterarn, New York: New American Library, 1969.

DOUBTS ABOUT TELEVISION EDUCATION

Arlene Moscovitch, National Film Board, Toronto

The term television education implies an institutionalized approach to teaching about a relatively classless medium. I get the image of specialist experts dispensing their knowledge to uneducated laypeople.

Although all classes do not have equal control over television, all classes have more or less equal access to viewing television. Television viewing is one of the few collective experiences in our society. By creating television education as an "area of study," we may be expropriating an aspect of people's lives to which we have no right. By institutionalizing the study of television we may be mystifying the medium, not demystifying it. Put another way, television education may be like sex education. Once it is made part of the school curriculum, all the fun is removed from the experience.

"To be considered educated" (as in "What do people need to know in order to become educated about television?") to me implies a set of objective criteria, against which one's performance can be measured. The implication is that these criteria have been established and are monitored by an elite group who have the knowledge to which others should aspire. The issue seems much clearer when it comes to Greek and Latin texts than when we are dealing with aspects of mass culture. Nevertheless, it is critically important to become aware of how the television medium works.

The question I would like to consider is: Why do children

need to become critically aware of what they see on television? Ideally, while children in a society are busily involved in learning about the content of their culture, including all the skills and knowledge they need in order to survive, they are also learning about how to evaluate the content. Our children have two parallel systems of education, the television medium and the classroom. From television they receive, overtly or subliminally, a great deal of information or supposition (including sex, class, and race biases) about their culture.

Children rarely consider what the information means. Yet it is the process of reflection, the development of critical awareness of meaning that will give them the possibility of choice. With choice comes power. So if one of the purposes of the formal educational system is to prepare thoughtful and discerning citizens, then a look at how the media work and the ways in which they influence our lives are obviously an important part of this task.

As I mentioned before, television watching seems to be one of the few classless and collective experiences our society offers. Probably almost all children come to school with a common lore, peopled by the same characters who have been placed in the same stock situations. The critical question, if we accept the idea that this mass of television experience should be dealt with and built upon, is how to do so most effectively?

The effectiveness of any particular approach seems to be directly tied to an understanding of the developmental stages reached by the students at that particular time. With younger children, it seems especially crucial to work from their own actual experiences of television viewing--what they watch, what they think they learn from what they watch--and then extend those experiences through role plays, drawings, group and individual stories, simple exercises involving framing, camera angle and movement in which a camera is not even a prerequisite. One could work more analytically with older students. How a television show is put together, the way in which the television network system works, why it works that way can all be examined.

Whenever I think about working with kids' experiences with television, I am haunted by one sequence from Frederick Wiseman's documentary, High School. The year is 1968, the place is a lower middle-class high school in Philadelphia. A young English teacher, clothed in a mini-skirt and good intentions, is desperately trying to find some way to make her classes relevant. She has xeroxed the words to a Simon and Garfunkel song, made a tape and is carrying out a thorough "English Language and Literature" analysis of the lyrics. And the kids? They're bored out of their minds. Their eyes roam the room or stare glassily ahead, their fingers drum the desk tops. They aren't fooled for a second. Different content, maybe; but the message is the same. Poor students, poor teacher.

I harp upon this cautionary tale because the strategy involved in teaching about television seems crucial. Television is not a "school subject;" it belongs to the kids just as much as it belongs to the teacher, if not more so. If television and its effects are to be examined within a school setting, it has to be done in such a way that the students do not feel we have invaded their territory or appropriated their culture.

ETHNIC BARRIERS IN THE DIFFERENTIATION OF FANTASY FROM REALITY

Gary Granzberg, University of Winnipeg

A major problem many cultures face today is the problem of teaching children to effectively differentiate fantasy from reality on television. Children everywhere find this difficult, but this is especially so for Native children. This paper defines the special difficulties faced by Native children and suggests a method to combat the problem.

A first step in dealing with the problem is the realization that it is not simply teaching the child which programs and characters are real and which are fantasy. Before that can be done, the child must first understand the concept of fantasy.

This step is often ignored, for we think differentiating of fantasy from reality is a natural and early development. But this is not so. We must realize that fantasy is an invention of the urbanized, specialized world. Fantasy is not a "natural" way of thinking which arises with maturity. It is a specially trained talent needed in the urban world, but not in most other places (at least not to the same extent).

The work of Luria[1], Kohlberg[2], Witkin[3], Piaget[4], Edwards[5], Whiting[6], Munroe[7] and others shows that people differ in their ability to dissociate their thought from the surrounding world and that this ability increases with cultural complexity, with education, and with occupational specialization.

It has been shown that children gradually develop an ability to differentiate thoughts generated internally in their minds

with no immediate external counterparts (e.g. day and night dreams) and thoughts generated by sensing real external events and objects. While every culture encourages this, they differ in which kind of thought is emphasized.

The Native child is taught to develop the thought sensed from the real external world. Native children are taught to view what we call "fantasy" (e.g. dreams and visions) in the same way as though from the real external world but sensed from hidden, distant, past, future or spiritual objects and events. The Native child is taught that the sensed world is given and inexorable and that thoughts (including dreams and visions) provide means to make ready for it; to anticipate it, deal with it and understand it--but not to change it.

The urban child on the other hand, is encouraged to explore fantasy thought; is taught that internally generated thoughts are potential shapers of reality; and that one can "dream" of new directions and can change the world for the better.

The urban child is given much practice at manipulating fantasy thoughts; is encouraged to speculate, imagine and abstract. At home the urban child is taught to sense the motives behind actions and to believe in no reality behind dreams, visions, ghosts and monsters. Although initially allowed to believe in fairy tales, Santa Claus, Easter Bunny and the tooth fairy, the urban child is soon made ashamed of an inability to distinguish fantasy from reality and quickly learns to keep the two concepts straight.

At school the urban child is taught abstract math and grammar and prodded into creating "make believe" stories. All around the child observes numerous examples of fantasy skill in the form of comic books, novels, movies, radio and television. And so, quite readily, the urban child develops an awareness of the distinction between fantasy and reality, learning to approach television and other fantasy productions with appropriate skepticism.

The situation is quite different in Native society. There, where the technology does not permit a feeling of dominance over nature but rather demands a sense of oneness with it, the child is taught to relate to the world through the concepts of fatalism and animism rather than science. The Native child is encouraged to observe, memorize and be ready to adjust flexibly.

The Native child's behaviour is measured more by its efficiency than the motives behind it. Although these traditional patterns meet with competing ideologies in the acculturation context, they prove surprisingly tenacious.

As the child learns the animistic philosophy, and is taught to pay careful attention to signs and revelations, it soon understands that dreams play a role here as do all manner of unusual occurrences, including various conjuring and divinatory mechanisms. As these mechanisms are believed to operate by means of the help of spiritual powers, the Native child is cautioned to be specially sensitive to the spiritual world and to seriously heed its various manifestations. The child thus comes to view the spirit world with its dreams and visions as reflections of

reality and not as fantasy, make-believe or hallucination.

A similar perspective is applied to stories and legends. These are not just entertainment, but they serve symbolically as reminders of the spirit world and of other aspects of reality (often hidden or not yet manifest). There are not "comic book" like stories which are sheer fantasy with no relevance to the immediate world. Native stories are always practical guides for life.

Hence, when the Native child confronts newly introduced television, the first task in education is to make him realize that there are stories on television which have no practical relevance. These stories are neither signs nor dreamlike revelations. Often they are not even representative of the true and current social, economic or political structure of the world (usually the White Man's world). This task is especially difficult because the Native word applied to television is often a word which denotes conjuring and dreaming because adults use analogies to dreaming, conjuring and storytelling to give television meaning.

How do we teach the Native child to understand the unreal quality of much of television programming? Dissociated lecture, of course, will not work, for that is a style of education suited only to children already skilled in fantasy thought. The approach should utilize traditional techniques such as observation, example and storytelling. One possibility is the development of a film with the following structure.

The scene opens with Native children watching television, perhaps a Tarzan show. The show ends and the children begin discussing the hero figure. Some questions I have actually heard on the reserve are the following: Is Tarzan real? Why did they take the Tarzan show off the air? Did Tarzan die, is that why? Can he really talk to animals? Do they use real bullets?

The children eventually decide to ask their grandfather about it. Instead of answering them directly, he tells them a story. It is a "trickster" tale. The exact nature of the story is yet to be worked out (for this requires close collaboration with Native storytellers), but one possibility is the incorporation of a legend in which trickster concerns himself with seeing. In it he juggles his eyes and experiments with putting other animal's eyes into his eye sockets to see in new ways. Perhaps he discovers an eye that shows beautiful and exciting things and promises much. But every time he tries to participate in what he sees, he finds that the eye has been misrepresenting and distorting things, making him look foolish.

The concept can be carried in numerous directions. Perhaps trickster gets an idea to retaliate. He decides to sell his eye. Maybe he makes many of them. Before each eye, he sets up a performance. He trains some animals to act in unusual and crazy ways and when someone looks through trickster's specially designed eyes, they will see those animals acting up and will think it's really happening and will become scared or alarmed and act foolish. And while they're predisposed and fascinated with

trickster's eye, he steals their real eyes. Now they must always use his special crazy eye.

The film may be interrupted at this point where the story ends and the teacher may ask the children their impressions. What did the story mean? What is trickster's specially made eye supposed to represent? A kit could be prepared to guide the teacher.

The film then commences once more and the children in the film are seen discussing the story they had heard. They argue over its meaning. Does it mean that television is like trickster's eye? Is television a big lie? Some argue yes and some argue no.

The scene shifts and they are in school and are asking their own teacher the meaning of the story. The teacher says that it means that television stories are sometimes false and misleading. We see the children being taken to a television studio and being shown how programs are made and especially how fights and injuries can be faked. The children learn how special angles and camera tricks are used to make something look quite different from what it really is. The children learn how television makes an event look more exciting or dangerous than it really is.

The children may then be seen returning to their grandfather and telling him of their revelations and how they now understand his story. At the end of the film the teacher may again raise the subject of "lies" on television and ask the children for their views.

REFERENCES

1 Luria, A. R.
1976 Cognitive Development: Its Cultural and Social Foundations. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

2 Kohlberg, Lawrence
1976 "Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach." In T. Lickona (ed.), Moral Development and Behaviour. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, pp. 31-53.

3 Witkin, H.A. and Berry, J.W.
1975 "Psychological Differentiations Across Cultures: A Theoretical and Empirical Integration." Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 6.

4 Piaget, Jean
1965 The Moral Judgement of the Child. New York: The Free Press. (First published 1932.)

5 Edwards, Carolyn P.
1975 "Societal Complexity and Moral Development: A Kenyan Study", Ethos, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 505-527.

6 Whiting, B.B. and Whiting, J.W.M., in collaboration with R. Logabough
1975 Children of Six Cultures: A Psycho-Cultural Analysis. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

7 Munroe, Robert and Ruth Munroe
1975 Cross-Cultural Human Development. Monterey: Books/Cole.

VIDEO CAMERA

CHILDREN, COGNITION AND TELEVISION

Bill Winn, University of Calgary

Literacy refers to a person's ability to read and write. Consideration of a child's television literacy must therefore be directed towards the child's ability both to interpret and produce television messages. While the development of both types of skill is essential if children are to become television literate, the remarks that follow are confined to the matter of children as interpreters of television messages.

A television literate child is one who can process the information gathered from television in a meaningful way. Information is only meaningful in this sense if it can be related to what a child already knows and feels. Television can only become meaningful as a result of the interaction between existing memory schema and the information television provides. This interaction is usually described by psychologists in terms of "bottom-up" (data-driven) and "top-down" (knowledge-driven) processes. For example, when a child sees something with a trunk on television, this activates, through association with previous knowledge, an "elephant" schema. Since this activation process is initiated by information external to the child, it is a "bottom-up" process. Next the child tests the hypothesis that it is indeed an elephant by checking information stored in the "elephant" schema (tusks, large size, flapping ears, grey colour) against the rest of the information presented by the television. Since the checking process begins with information the child already possesses, it is a "top-down" process. If sufficient

features match, then the child concludes that it is indeed an elephant. This is a simple example, but it serves to illustrate a set of processes that invariably operates no matter how complex the information is that a child is viewing.

The interaction between existing knowledge and external information is manifest in (at least) three types of cognitive processes: perceptual, assimilative, and analogical.

Perceptual Processes

These are processes by means of which the elements seen in a particular visual display, such as a single television scene, are assembled into a coherent whole. Generally, they enable children to identify figures as opposed to background, and more specifically to make judgments such as whether the red object and the triangular object are the same object, that is, whether or not they are looking at a red triangle.

Assimilative Processes

Assimilative processes allow the child to classify what they see on the basis of critical features. An eagle is classified as a bird because of its wings, a poplar as a tree because of its leaves, branches and general shape. It is, of course, important that schema exist to which information can be assimilated.

Analogical Processes

When a well-established schema exists to which information

seen on television can be assimilated, the only way it can be understood is through analogy. Analogical processes allow the temporary assimilation of information to schema that are related to it only in some metaphorical sense. For example, a child who has never seen a kangaroo before might assimilate information about one to a "frog" schema, until a separate "kangaroo" schema has been established. While kangaroos are like frogs in one respect, they are unlike them in many others, so it would be wrong for the child to be led to the conclusion that kangaroos are frogs. However, it is useful for the child to think that kangaroos are in one respect frog-like, for this gives them a mental reference point they can use until they know more about kangaroos.

In each of these three processes, it is clear that understanding what appears on television is in large part determined by existing schema. These schema are themselves determined by various factors related to the child's development. Of particular relevance to television literacy are three aspects of development: cultural, and knowledge.

Cognitive Development

As children grow up, they go through a number of identifiable intellectual stages, each building upon the previous one. Each stage is characterized by certain unique styles of mental functioning, which to adult eyes may seem to be intellectual limitations, but which form a complete and functional system of reasoning for the child at that particular

stage. This means that children at different ages think differently from children at other ages, and think differently from adults.

Most television programming, even that aimed at children, is prepared by adults, thinking like adults from an adult point of view. Children's understanding of television, moderated by non-adult intellectual processes, is problematic. A good illustration of this concerns drawing inferences. Children younger than eight years old have difficulty making the kind of inferences adults are expected to draw from television advertisements. Imagine a Buick on a deserted beach, a couple hand in hand walking into the sunset, a cozy cottage next to the car. Adults interpret this as suggesting that people who drive Buicks are wealthy enough to own a cottage by the sea, are romantically inclined, in love, and so on. The only inference one typical grade three student could make from this picture was that the car was on the beach because the people had driven it there. Other examples of this developmental effect are: the inability of younger children to interpret information from other people's points of view; the tendency of younger children to attend more to the surface appearance of a message than older children, who give relatively more attention to its content; and the difficulty younger children have integrating the elements of a picture to make a meaningful whole.

Cultural Development

Part of growing up involves learning the conventions of the culture in which the child lives. Many of these conventions involve visual cues, affecting television literacy. Examples are body language, facial expressions and clothing. Adults are so familiar with these cues that they often overlook the fact that they have to be learned. Younger children might not understand that a person who wears a gold ring is married, or that one who wears a black arm-band is in mourning. More importantly children often will not understand the various codes of interpersonal behaviour that appear constantly on television. For example, the way Archie Bunker treats Edith is comic rather than cruel because the adult audience knows he is making a fool of himself, and that Edith will win out in the end. However, the behavioural cues that lead adults to interpret the interactions between Archie and Edith as comical might not be picked up by younger children, who would give the program an entirely different interpretation. The same would be true for just about every drama and sitcom on the air.

Knowledge Development

Children also acquire facts as they grow up. These facts comprise a body of knowledge that affect their interpretation of television. Knowledge about television itself is influential. Once children know how television programs are made, how its many illusions are created and its tricks accomplished, they will be in a better position to distinguish fact from fantasy and

information from entertainment. In addition, knowledge of the world permits easier assimilation and classification of information about the world derived from experience. A child who knows something about insects, perhaps from having studied them in school, will be better able to understand about a beetle that he finds in the yard than a child who is generally uninformed about insects.

It is the stage of development of a child's cognitive processes and knowledge that mostly determines how the child will understand television. How meaningful television is, indeed the meaning of television itself, is therefore determined by psychological and cultural influences which are only now beginning to be understood. It is to these influences that developers of children's television programs and materials to teach television literacy should direct their attention. To avoid doing so will lead to much wasted effort.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TELEVISION EDUCATION

Nikos Metallinos, Concordia University

The study of television, or television education, started from the moment the medium was developed about 40-50 years ago, and it has covered both the TV process (making of TV images) and effects (viewer responses to these images). The bulk of these studies shows that emphasis is placed on studies of the medium's effects (the analysis of TV programming)[1], whereas little emphasis is placed on explaining the process involved in making the TV images. The development of television education will be retarded as long as viewers, students and researchers do not concern themselves with the particular (1) instruments (cameras, lights and other technical equipment), (2) materials (light, sound, etc.) and (3) techniques (artistic or aesthetic principles) that are unique to the medium, and understand that they interrelate in producing the visual message.[2] Such an approach will result in the development of a particular language (or grammar)[3] of the TV medium and consequently will more effectively inform viewers about the medium.

The proper handling, manipulation and utilization of the medium's instruments are prerequisites for an effective visual message. The setting of the lighting for maximum clarity of the TV image and picture resolution is but one of many principles governing the first factors of television production. A properly lit scene (both technically and artistically) will have a good effect on the clarity of the content, the visual message. The same is true with the TV cameras, the switcher and the audio

facility. All are unique to the medium and have their own peculiar characteristics which need to be studied.[4]

Familiarizing oneself with the audio visual materials that complete the TV messages is equally important in the understanding of television. Insofar as the visual materials (produced by the light of the TV picture) are concerned, the principles of perception and cognition are paramount. Equally important is the study of auditory perception and the exact way in which acoustics and sounds are generated, processed and conceived by the ear and the brain.[5]

The handling of the instruments and materials of the TV medium is but one prerequisite in understanding television. We need to develop techniques with which we can construct effective (that is, artistic) visual messages. Consequently, in this third step, all the principles of composition (as they have been established in other visual communication media such as painting, photography and film) must be employed for the visual messages to be effective. The TV picture must have "balance," it must comply with the rules of proper "proportions" and it must have a "direction" to mention only the most important ones.[6]

In summary, the concepts, principles and generalizations that should guide the development of television education must start with the understanding of the medium (its instruments, its materials, and its techniques). The negative and sometimes even detrimental effects that TV programs have on children, for example, can never be fully studied unless the medium (the form) which shapes the content is understood.

REFERENCES

1 Nikos Metallinos, "Empirical Studies in Visual Communications: Empirical Studies in TV Composition." Paper presented at the 12th Annual Conference on Visual Literacy by the IVLA in Washington, D.C., November 8, 1980

2 Evalina Tarroni, "The Aesthetics of Television," Television: The Critical View edt. by H. Newcomb (2nd ed.) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). pp. 437-461.

3 Herbert Zetti, "The Rare Case of TV Aesthetics," Journal of the University Films Association, Vol. 30, No. 2 Spring, 1978, pp. 3-8.

4 Rudolf Arnheim, Art and Visual Perception (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

5 Gerald Murch, Visual and Auditory Perception (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1973).

6 Gerald Millerson, The Technique of Television Production (New York: Hastings House Publishers, Inc., 1966).

THE CRITICAL VIEWING OF TELEVISION

Jack Livesley, TVOntario

The philosophy of TVOntario is that television can be used as a resource, as part of a learning system. For learning to take place, viewers who are critically aware of the medium and its methods must respond and interact. This awareness is developed through examination and exploration in a process known as critical viewing.

Let's examine four levels or phases of critical viewing. The first deals with basic techniques and processes of production, while the other three are related and interconnected methods of viewing and response.

The best way of exploring production techniques is through practical "hands on" experience, getting involved in the use of cameras, sound equipment, lighting, staging, scripting, directing and editing. Even young children can take part in production games using still pictures, clippings, and drama to simulate the process of production. In fact, in the early stages at least, the process is much more important than the product.

One of the most useful tools for exploring the techniques of television is the portapak camera and videotape recorder. Most youngsters can learn to use this instrument and begin to get passable results within about 10 minutes. (Adults take a little longer!) While the portapak does have some limitations as far as TV production is concerned, most of the processes of the media can be understood with its use.

Because the tape combines sound with picture, and can be played back and erased, students working in small groups can examine people, places, and things in order and combination to build simple stories or to develop points of view and topics in which they are interested. Interviews can be recorded and sounds can be added to picture sequences. Most importantly the students can see their results and learn from their mistakes.

For many educators and adult leaders, the portapak is a tool for exploring the techniques of production, and for developing skills in other areas of learning. For students with reading and writing problems, the portapak exercises give them an opportunity to improve skills in research, questioning, organization (for some, it is often the first time they've learned to put things in order and sequence), and presentation. TVOntario published three handbooks, The Third Eye, Behind The Third Eye, and Picture This, which document workshops and techniques for working with students with the portapak and in small studio settings.

The second level of exploration of the medium is the examination of the topics of television. Here we are looking at television as a communal activity, discovering what subjects and methods of presentation can be useful to groups needing stimuli or catalysts for discussion and action. We may, in this phase, be examining television itself as a topic for discussion among educators, parents and children. In any case, no matter what the topic or program subject, we are getting away from seeing TV as just a passive device, and beginning to see it as a tool for

social action. Dramas, documentaries, and interview shows are often the basis for this phase of our learning system.

In this special International Year of the Disabled Person, programs and series have been developed for groups and individuals to use as a basis for their activities. The same was done for the International Year of the Child in 1979. Often the programs are those that have been seen before or used in another series or context, but the print materials, workshops and approaches developed for them are designed to give groups and leaders ideas for participation. Telecourses in community colleges, usually run on local cable channels, are another example of this level of critical viewing.

The third level of critical viewing is the exploration of television as a service to individual learning--the exploration of self. This phase, of course, is closely linked to number two above, and is often almost the same. The difference is, in the use of TV, the individual may not want to share his problems in a group, but learn on his own. This is a more personal and emotional level of interaction.

Over the last few years TVOntario has developed projects to help poor readers improve their literacy skills through its Prime Time reading series. Absorbing dramas (such as That's My Name, Don't Wear It Out) are shown at 8:00 p.m. (prime time). Scripts, audio tapes and booklets are made available to individuals, groups, and classes so they can use the materials of the drama--the dialogue, description, plot, characters, and atmosphere--to

improve their basic reading skills. The materials also contain imaginative approaches to other stories, poems, and art work to help individuals develop their own talents and abilities.

TVOntario also organizes "academies" using a television series as the basis, with questionnaires, print materials and computerized systems for enabling viewers to get involved in the topics of the programs by signing up for the print packages and responding through individual writing or in group discussion of the programs. Academies have been conducted in such subjects as parenting, health and the environment, and music. Leadership handbooks are developed. Workshops are given on conducting group discussions with the use of television.

The main idea in both levels two and three is to encourage television watchers to do something with what they view: join a discussion group, go to the library, art gallery, or, in general, become self-directed learners. The viewer comes to realize that almost any drama or documentary type program, can be used--viewed critically--as a step to a learning activity.

This developing of activities from viewing habits leads us to the fourth level of critical viewing: exploration of the medium as a catalyst for creativity. This, of course, is an expansion of levels two and three. At this level the viewer is not just responding to the topic of following up the presentation, but getting involved during the program and planning for creative activity. One popular TVOntario series for pre-schoolers is Polka Dot Door in which children are encouraged through games and songs to make, draw and build various things.

Readalong for elementary classes grades 1 to 4 has children responding to the characters, words and phrases on the screen to build their reading and communications skills. Three years ago a summer project called Camp TVOntario was developed with programs in arts and crafts (Vision On) and an open ended drama game series called What If..., to encourage participants at home, in libraries and in community centres to develop their talents in arts and drama. Parent's books, leader's handbooks, student materials and workshops designed to show teachers, librarians, recreation leaders and others how to use these materials are available.

This summer TVOntario is developing an activity called Let's Play TV, in which youngsters age 7-12 are encouraged, through sessions in creative drama and simulated games, to discuss and examine their TV viewing habits and develop their critical awareness of the medium.

Children and adults should be encouraged to talk about what they watch and how they watch. And it isn't always done when they watch. If we listen, we'll discover that people tell us a great deal about themselves and their attitudes. I believe that there is a readiness for TV education and critical viewing just as there is for reading or any other kind of learning. And, as in any other kind of learning, this readiness occurs at different times in different people. The job of those of us who are concerned with television and education is to supply the training and tools when the learners are ready so that we can help them to make TV viewing a useful resource and a positive and creative force in their lives.

IMPRESSIONS ON TELEVISION EDUCATION

Lois J. Baron, Concordia University

Young children--preschoolers and kindergartners--have some understanding of what is and is not real on television. For example, they know that Big Bird or Bugs Bunny are not real and that they could not visit the Flintstones in Bedrock. Naturally, the level of sophistication of their verbalizations is restricted by their limited cognitive ability. Nevertheless, by grade 3, children have acquired the logical processes that allow them to make sense of many conventions of the medium that make up the fantasy world of television.

It is the technical aspects of the television world that young children do not understand. Children up to 12 years of age are limited in their understanding of shots, the production process, the electronics of television transmission and reception, and the role of the networks. Although they understand that actors play roles and that television distorts time and space, their knowledge of production techniques like animation are limited.

Making sense of our world (perception) is a naturally occurring process. Education should provide children with the kinds of visual, tactile, and sensory activities that allow perceptual and visual literacy processes to mature in a creative way.

Assessing how much knowledge of perception children need to be considered educated is a difficult task mainly because we are speaking about process. To my mind, it is not knowledge of

perception, but rather the heightening of perception with no limitations with which we should be concerned. "To be educated " assumes rights and wrongs. With some knowledge of basic skills, children must go beyond these constraints in order for true analytical thought to develop.

Although provincial governments usually have the final say about what is and is not included in school curricula, the primary responsibility for educating people about television belongs to educators. For television viewing skills to be introduced in the classroom, teacher preparation programs should offer pre- and in-service methodology courses and workshops which show how to integrate television viewing skills into existing programs in the language arts and social studies. I favour a strategy involving workshops for all curriculum coordinators and consultants in the language arts, social studies and media areas. Once the concepts of television literacy had been introduced to these people, they would bear the responsibility for disseminating the ideas in their respective school districts.

Parents should also be educated in media literacy. Workships held for parents would heighten their media literacy levels, educate them to deal with television viewing in the home, and activate them to lobby for such programs in the schools.

Governments could adapt to the Canadian context the model used by the U.S. Office of Education for developing curricula and sponsoring training workshops. Initial funding to establish workshops across the country might be directed toward individuals

in various universities who could serve as animators in their respective provinces.

The provincial education television networks (e.g. Radio Quebec, TVOntario, Access, Know) bear a portion of the responsibility for educating children about the media. These institutions have the resources to develop the necessary print and non-print materials for home and classroom use. They have established contacts with educators and the necessary organizations for disseminating information across the provinces.

Emphasis on television education's instilling analytical and critical thinking, not just "learning" about television, would be a positive learning experience. Today's children are watching and identifying with what they see on television. Television is the most prevalent common denominator in most children's lives. A "good" teaching-learning situation involving a medium with which children are already familiar could only enhance their intellectual growth. The consequences of failing to educate about television would most likely be the perpetuation of the kinds of programming we are presently exposed to and, most importantly, the loss of the opportunity to enhance learning and cognitive growth through a means so familiar to children.

There is readiness for acquiring the knowledge and skills associated with any sort of learning. Rather than stress the readiness of the child (although this is of course an important consideration), the emphasis should be on the school being ready for the individual learner. This involves supplying children with the necessary basic skills, concepts, and principles at a

level that children can handle cognitively.

Because of their limited mental sophistication, the youngest children (even preschoolers) should be introducted to television-related concepts through action-oriented, hands-on approaches. Just as young children learn to read by feature-analysis so too can their perceptions of the television world be sharpened by starting at the lowest levels of skill and knowledge acquisition.

Some successful critical television viewing and film-making projects have already been tried with chilren at the preschool level. My research suggests that children as young as four years old have some (although limited) understanding of television-related elements. As in any teaching-learning situation a match must be made between the capabilities of the individual learner, the nature of the learning task, and the mode of instruction.

Individuals responsible for teaching the analytical skills necessary for understanding the medium must have training in both teaching strategies and in the medium itself. To teach around the medium is to know it. By heightening their own media literacy levels, teachers would inevitably begin disseminating their knowledge to others.

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact concepts, principles, and generalizations that should guide the development of television education because the area is in its infancy. There are many points of view on this. Some may want to emphasize,

through television education, the general concepts of visual literacy as expressed by Arnheim (e.g. texture, composition, etc.). Others might borrow from the U.S. Office of Education definition of critical television viewing (e.g. 1. distinguish program elements 2. make judicious use of viewing time 3. understand the psychological implications of advertising, etc.).

Recognizing that in some way our objective is to teach the language, form and grammar of television, we should concern ourselves with both the content and the process. Identifying a taxonomy of learning skills, taking into account developmental and other individual differences is crucial to the ultimate end of developing formal reasoning skills in the learner. Learners must be guided from simple basic skill learning to a stage where they have the capacity to handle these concepts in a more inductive manner.

Evidence of being educated about television could be measured in terms of the individual being able to know, comprehend, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate (to borrow from Bloom's Taxonomy) the skills, principles, and theories acquired through a television education curriculum. One would naturally have to take into account individual differences in learning styles, cognitive development, and the like before assigning levels of mastery. The ultimate evidence, at any stage of development, should be the ability to perceive onself in relation to the medium; that is, one is able to differentiate one's perception of the world from that projected by the television world.

A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE ON TELEVISION EDUCATION

Louis Ho, Memorial Composite High School, Stony Plain, Alberta

Only by knowing and understanding the media by actual participation will people be able to evaluate and process what they see, hear, and read. Since television is a persuasive communication medium working through our senses, people need to know how their senses can be manipulated in order to accept a television message.

Visual literacy is basic to television education. A person must know how a picture is composed by understanding elements such as colour, texture, tone, lighting, point of view, etc. Although one needs to know little about the physics and engineering of television, it is helpful to understand that television is a process of technological transformation of light (pictures) to currents (broadcasting or closed circuit wiring) and then back to pictures (light) again.

People must understand how a message is processed before it is televised. This means that they must know about the basic production techniques used in the medium as well as the social climate in which television production occurs.

Critical viewing inevitably touches upon the issue of social values. The general public reaction to television programming is that commericial stations provide far too many programs which do not have the effect of raising public taste. In fact, many programs often have the opposite result. Consequently, in the process of television education, we have to consider current

social values and expectations and the way such values and expectations are maintained by television programming.

Assuming that television literacy is considered as important as reading, writing, and arithmetic, the responsibility for educating people about television is the responsibility of provincial governments. These governments will delegate the responsibility to school boards and agencies such as libraries for action.

The consequences of failing to educate people about television may not be completely clear. However, without television education people are likely to be persuaded to believe what television tells them to believe. They may be less likely to exercise critical judgment about issues and problems confronting them.

Television commercials exert this influence on people. The public's expectations of material comfort are being influenced by television advertising. When their expectations are not fulfilled, people may become restless and look for unacceptable avenues to achieve their material goals.

In educating people about television, both the teacher and the learner must consider how the medium influences and teaches values. It is only when people have overcome the subtlety of the medium that they can become creative and conscious viewers capable of deciding what to accept and what to reject.

There is a readiness for acquiring the knowledge and skills of television education. For example, children in grades one to

four may be too young to handle complex production processes, but can develop their perceptual skills through picture composition, photography, and creative expression of their visual environment. Children in the upper elementary grades seem to possess self-discipline, coordination, and the capacity for making value judgments. A more formal study of television could be undertaken, emphasizing production methods and content analysis.

Any program for television education must consider the cultural background of the learner. For example, some cultural groups do not seem to distinguish reality from fantasy. Members of these groups believe that the television camera does magic. Respecting what these learners bring to the study of television, we must help them to understand how their cultural perspective influences what they see and hear on television.

A framework for television education should include attention to the following topics:

1. Basic knowledge of television as a medium of communication, including the basic understanding of 'electrography'.
2. History of television as a means of communication.
3. Visual and audio perceptions; visual literacy.
4. Visual and audio components of television.
5. Types of television programs.
6. Prime time television broadcasting.
7. Network programming.

8. Influence of television on our lives.
9. Television commercials and consumer education.
10. Content analysis.
11. Television vocabularies.
12. Production techniques, including the preparation of graphics, script writing, lighting, simple editing, etc.
13. Television distortions and stereotyping.
14. Operation of simple television equipment.
15. 'Quick and dirty' production of television programs.
16. Use of cable television facilities for democratic self-expression.
17. Studio setting production.
18. Use of mobile studio.
19. Commercial and educational television programming. ACCESS (Alberta) TVOntario, KNOW (British Columbia).
20. How citizens can unite to influence television programming.
21. The future of television; Telidon and videotex technology.

People who have mastered the skills and knowledge associated with these areas should exhibit the following characteristics:

1 Conscious viewing: A conscious viewer will be able to critically assess the following aspects of a program--technical quality, characterization, plot, setting, action, point of view, social values, persuasiveness, distortion, exaggeration, etc.

2 Creative viewing: The creative viewer will be able to think backward and forward while viewing a program, identifying

ways to improve the production or extend the ideas used in the production. The creative viewer can identify camera shots, camera angles, special effects, sequence of editing, colour, tone, music, and sound effects.

3 Controlled viewing: A controlled viewer is one who is selective in television; is able to select programs in accordance to an articulated set of values and standards, and is aware of the limitations of the programs viewed.

4 Informed viewing: An informed viewer is able to discuss a program after viewing it; can compare the point of view expressed by one program with that of another; and can examine a program's message for values and moral standards.

5 Active viewing: An active viewer is one prepared to take action to encourage television programming of high quality.

Whatever the form television education takes, it will undoubtedly bear close relations to other forms of education. For example, in program production, leadership, team work, cooperation, social adjustment and interpersonal relations are all promoted. Creativity is encouraged through script writing, selection of sound effects and background music, and the preparation of property and setting. Both verbal and visual communication skills are enhanced by all phases of program

production. Television education relates to many subject areas, including language arts, social studies, science, home economics, arithmetic, and industrial education.

An approach which emphasizes the active participation of the learner will probably be more successful in promoting people who are capable of evaluating and processing what they see and hear than a passive approach. Formal curricula designed for school students and adults should help them understand and cope with the persuasive power of the medium and understand the part it plays in their society.

TELEVISION EDUCATION: A TEACHER'S VIEW

Barbara K. Esdale, Jasper Place Composite High School, Edmonton

Any program developed for educating about television should strive to create a critical and an aware viewer. Television education should not be used to tell students that television is a waste of time, immoral, and the cause of all the problems we face. Television education does imply, however, that students be given a foundation for drawing their own conclusions about television and the part it will play in their lives, based on an informed examination. An educated viewer will actively analyze and evaluate what is being watched rather than passively accept it.

It seems reasonable to consider the developmental stages that children pass through in constructing a program for television education. The way different cultural groups use television should also be considered. We know that development and culture interact in influencing how and what we learn. Ignoring these important dimensions will make any program less successful.

The development of television education should move from the simple to the complex, corresponding to the elementary and secondary school grades. A student on leaving grade 12 should have a good understanding of television--what it is, how it works, and how to understand the complex messages with which it bombards us. Education about television would be dealt with best by integrating it with existing subjects in the school curriculm. Integration would help relate the medium more

directly to the child's other learning experiences. Television education should be given a common weighting in the study of basic communication processes--reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing--active and critical viewing.

At the elementary level, television education should be integrated into daily lessons that involve teaching children how to see and understand visual messages. Although their daily exposure to television makes them "experts," few children are educated to analyze and evaluate what they see. At the secondary school level, an indepth course on television education would be appropriate, perhaps as an option for interested students; a more general unit on television should, however, be compulsory.

Students need to develop awareness about three areas in order to commence study in television education. First, a vocabulary for understanding the technical aspects of the medium must be established; second, an historical perspective from which to view television as a technological influence on society should be explored; and third, an understanding of the difference between the reality and fantasy of television should be defined and encouraged.

A video vocabulary is essential for understanding the technical aspects of the medium of television. This vocabulary enables people to see what was not immediately apparent, that is, to identify the audio and visual elements that transmit the message to the viewer. A person educated about television should be able to identify types of camera shots and angles, as well as components of the sound track. From such a basic foundation,

people can then move to a more sophisticated analysis of composition and editing.

Students require a general understanding about how television fits into the historical growth of technology in our society. Since television is a relatively new medium, information about its place in the history of technology would provide a new perspective for students, since they are often unaware of the role of older media (e.g. film, radio) in a pre-TV world. Part of this knowledge involves developing an appreciation of network programming, ratings, program spin-offs, and the role and power of the commercial advertiser. Another aspect of this dimension is an understanding of the image television presents to us of ourselves, our country and the world. Canadians must understand how television exposes us to situations where American values are shaping our views of who and what we are, our views of right and wrong, and our definition of success and happiness.

To be considered educated about television, students also need to be able to distinguish between reality and fantasy. For children who emulate the characters they see on television and for the viewer who gets most of his knowledge about the world from television, the ability to perceive the difference between what is real and what is fabrication is essential. Small children believe the characters they see each week are real, and after years of TV watching, tend to become desensitized to "real"

scenes of violence, war, etc. shown on the news, especially since the news program follows a similar format to that of the entertainment program.

Whatever the eventual form television education takes, it should lead students to the following points:

1 They should be able to identify the audio and visual components of television.

2 They should be able to distinguish between what is real and what is fantastic on television.

3 They should recognize television for the powerful influence it is on individuals, cultures, and societies.

4 They should be able to evaluate programs on qualitative grounds and support their viewpoints with details.

5 They should be more demanding and selective viewers.

If these objectives are met, then the goal of developing a more active, aware and critical television viewer and consumer will have been achieved. The viewer could then be considered to be educated about television.

Television education is one of many important things that people need to know about to deal successfully with a changing world. The extensive exposure people get to television every day demands that they learn how to evaluate what they are viewing. The increasing sophistication of television and television-related technology demands that we learn not only how people use it, but how the technology uses people. Since television is a pervasive and persuasive medium, students need guidelines to evaluate its messages and, as well, need to learn

how to read and write visual messages themselves. This need for television education is now being recognized by many educators, such as Terry Herndon, Chairman of the National Council for Children and Television:

> It is absolutely essential that we find ways to increase the ability of children to use television selectively and view it critically. (Today's Education, September, 1980.)

As the old bard himself might have said, had he been a modern TV sit-com script writer: "TV or not TV? Let's tune in to the question."

EPILOGUE

One most often associates an epilogue with a short concluding section at the end of a literary work. In recent years, epilogues have become part of television productions, too. While the workshop participants have no illusions that their speculative contributions to this volume are literary, many of them expressed a preference for an epilogue.

Although we spent more than 30 hours in formal discussion during the two and a half days we were together, we seemed to gather energy and commitment from our interaction. Thus, in addition to sharing viewpoints about the questions stated in the overview, we established some general directions for further work in the field.

We were encouraged that the Multiculturalism Directorate undertook the organization of the workshop. Although each of us came to the workshop convinced of the importance of systematically studying television, we brought with us the feeling that the study of television was undervalued by funding agencies and governmental bodies. The directorate's attention, we felt, would legitimize more substantial support by other agencies and bodies.

Our decision to produce a report about the workshop was among the many devoted to dissemination. We agreed that too little is known about the importance of television education. While each of us could point to pockets of activity in the field, attention to television education seems sporadic and isolated. It was felt that others working in the field would be encouraged

from the wide dissemination of a report which pointed to television education as an area deserving of serious systematic inquiry. It was also felt that wide dissemination of this report would provide impetus to further communication among researchers and practitioners concerned with television education throughout the country.

Our enthusiasm for what we had accomplished in two and a half days together led us to make a number of commitments for continuing the dialogue we had begun in Ottawa. Plans were discussed for bringing the group together again in 1982 to conduct workshops for researchers, teachers, and curriculum specialists working in the field. While no specific dates were set, there was general agreement that late Spring would permit enough time to acquire support for another workshop and to identify interested participants.

During the workshop, participants identified the need for development in many facets of television education. The importance of developing visual literacy in young children was a persistent theme throughout the workshop. Early acquisition of the skills which make a person visually literate was seen as an important prelude to the study of specific media.

Within the field of television education, several avenues of further curriculum development were identified. Although television had received some attention in the language arts, it was felt that much more could be done in this area. Using the concepts and skills cultivated by the language arts, pupils could

be helped to examine their experience with television more critically.

From the outset, members of the workshop expressed concern about the frequency and manner of representation of people from working class and ethnic minority backgrounds. This concern became more general over the two and a half days, focusing on the way in which society is represented on television. We returned often to the question "What does society tell itself about itself, using the medium of television?" It was felt that the relation between television and society was an important and appropriate focal point for the attention of social studies.

The more we talked, the more acutely aware we became of the shortcomings of our own knowledge of the medium. Indeed, it was generally felt that television was an under-researched medium. During the 30 hours of discussion, we identified numerous lines of research and specific questions. Among the most pressing were knowledge of the cultural and cognitive influences on a person's receptivity to television messages, knowledge of the visual impact of television images on the meaning a viewer derives, and knowledge of the positive aspects of learning from television at least commensurate with knowledge of its deleterious features.

It is the irony of retrospect that what I began as an

epilogue to the workshop has become a compendium of beginnings. Perhaps the usefulness of this epilogue will not be as an ending, but as a stimulus to your own work in the field.

Charles Ungerleider
Vancouver, British Columbia
June, 1981

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

LOIS J. BARON is an associate professor of education at the Sir George Williams Campus of Concordia University in Montreal, teaching in the Early Childhood Education Program. Her doctoral work in applied psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education involved an investigation of the eye movements in children viewing the Electric Company. Her research on children and the media investigates children's perceptions of television elements such as fantasy/reality, technology, space, and role playing.

JOAN COLLINS is a program coordinator with Simon Fraser University's teacher education program. She has been a teacher at the elementary school level and an instructor in teacher education and Native teacher preparation at the University of British Columbia. Her work in visual literacy has involved the development of curriculum materials for use with children in the primary grades. She is interested in multicultural program development involving visual literacy for use with elementary school age children.

LON DUBINSKY is a lecturer in media studies in the Department of Education, Dalhousie University. Periodically, he also lectures in film history at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. He has co-authored projects for the National Film Board and does writing and research for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. His Idea series "The Art of Letters" was broadcast in 1980.

BARBARA K. ESDALE is a teacher at Jasper Place Composite High School in Edmonton. She has designed and taught several courses about television at the junior and senior secondary levels. In 1979, she completed her Master of Science in Educational Technology with a Master's paper on teacher inservice in media utilization. Her TV Critical Viewing Skills unit has been presented at several international conferences and has been the topic of several publications.

GARY GRANZBERG is a professor in the Department of Anthropology, University of Winnipeg. He received his training as an anthropologist with psychological and humanistic concerns. He has conducted research among the Hopi Indians of Arizona and Cree Indians of Manitoba. For the past eight years, he has conducted a longitudinal investigation of the impact of television on the Cree Indians of Manitoba.

CHUCK HEATH has worked as an environmental education instructor, an elementary school teacher, a community school coordinator, a senior assistant in a community school, and as a faculty associate at Simon Fraser University. In his work as a faculty associate, he was responsible for working with student teachers, teaching in media, and offering workshops to practicing teachers. His involvement in media over the years has ranged from establishing darkrooms in elementary schools to co-producing a series of television documentaries on the North Vancouver School System in British Columbia.

LOUIS K. HO is currently head librarian at Memorial Composite High School in Stony Plain, Alberta. He has authored several articles on television literacy and has instructed in a television literacy project at Meridian Heights School in Stony Plain.

JACK LIVESLEY is education development officer for the Ontario Educational Communications Authority. He has been a teacher and administrator in the elementary and secondary schools in Ottawa. He has also been an on-camera host, writer, and co-producer in television as well as a textbook writer and editor.

ARLENE MOSCOVITCH is the education officer for the Ontario region of the National Film Board of Canada. She is a former teacher of English literature and editor. She is particularly interested in the relations between language and the media.

NIKOS METALLINOS is an associate professor of communications studies at Concordia University in Montreal. His research work in visual literacy related areas is drawn from the neuro-physiological findings on the asymmetrical functions of the human brain. He is particularly interested in the dynamic composition of visual elements within film and television screens. His works have been published in several journals.

MOLLY STROYMAN is an educator and editor of audio visual teaching materials for Sound Filmstrips, Ltd. She has broad experience in social service and educational endeavours aimed at the integration of identities in culturally different settings. Her work reflects a commitment to materials with a strong visual component for reaching large culturally heterogenous audiences.

ANNE TAYLOR is education officer for the National Film Board of Canada. She is a former teacher and the author of Hands On: A Media Resource Book For Teachers. Hands On explores the tools of mass media as channels for learning.

BARBARA THOMAS is schools co-ordinator for the Cross-Cultural Communications Centre. She is co-author of The City Kids' Book, a social studies/language arts program designed to help children understand how ethnicity and social class influence who they are. She has also developed a workshop series for parents and teachers titled "As the World Really Turns: Talking With Students About the Media."

CHARLES UNGERLEIDER is an associate professor in the Department of Social and Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia. He designed and teaches in the Collaborative Program for Professional Development, a school-based teacher education program. He has produced teaching materials to promote television education for use at the elementary and secondary school levels in connection with the language arts and social studies.

BILL WINN is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education, University of Calgary. His main interests involve the relation between cognitive psychology and visual learning, visual instruction and instructional design for effective visual communications.